

without noting the last resting place of their venerable chief. Moving on, they crossed the Ohio, near the mouth of the Cumberland and thence passed through southern Illinois to Cape Girardeau.

A severe winter had set in before the last detachment reached the Mississippi. The river was choked with floating ice, crossing was dangerous, and they were compelled to await the clearing of the current. The weather was bitterly cold and hundreds of sick and dying filled the wagons or were stretched upon the frozen ground with only a sheet or blanket stretched above to protect them from the cutting blast. The hardships through which they had passed during the last few months had reduced their vitality, while homesickness and mental depression so preyed upon their minds as to render them easy subjects to disease from which they could not rally. Hundreds never lived to cross the Father of Waters, and their bodies were left to moulder in an alien soil and among a people with scant regard for the sanctity of an Indian grave.

When finally the last detachment was able to cross the river and continue the journey they found it necessary to take the northern route through central Missouri by way of Springfield and Southwest City, because those who had preceded them going through the southern part of the state to Fort Smith had killed off the game upon which they depended largely for subsistence. It was March when they reached their destination. More than four thousand had perished on the way, among them the wife of Chief Ross.